

to evolve. Today the notion of national self-defense has come to include pre-emptive or preventive military action against those who are perceived to be a threat. A war on terrorism in which the enemy may not always be a specific nation-state has become the primary defense concerns of the United States.

The War Powers Resolution of 1973 was intended to clarify the intent of the constitutional framers and ensure that Congress and the President share in the decision-making process in the event of armed conflict.

Yet, since the enactment of the Resolution, presidents have consistently maintained that the consultation, reporting and congressional authorization requirements of the Resolution are unconstitutional obstacles to executive authority.

Mr. Speaker, the Constitution divides war powers between the legislative and executive branches. Our Constitution states that while the Commander in Chief has the power to conduct war, only Congress has the power to authorize war. Too many times this Congress has abdicated its constitutional duty and allowed Presidents to overstep their constitutional authority.

As James Madison said, and I quote, "In no part of the Constitution is more wisdom to be found than in the clause which confides the question of war or peace to the legislature and not to the executive department."

Mr. Speaker, it is time for Congress to meet its constitutional responsibility. The framers sought to decentralize the war powers of the United States and construct a balance between the political branches. Because this balance has been both respected and ignored throughout American history, I have today introduced legislation, H.J. Resolution 53, the Constitutional War Powers Resolution that seeks to establish a clear and national policy for today's post-9/11 world. This resolution is a result of the dedicated work of the Constitutional Project and its War Powers Initiative.

The Constitutional War Powers Resolution improves upon the War Powers Resolution of 1973 in a number of ways. It clearly spells out the powers that the Congress and the President must exercise collectively, as well as the defensive measures that the Commander in Chief may exercise without congressional approval. It also provides a more robust reporting requirement to enable Congress to be more informed and to have great oversight.

By more fully clarifying the war powers of the President and the Congress, the Constitutional War Powers Resolution rededicates Congress to its primary constitutional role of deciding when to use force abroad. This resolution protects and preserves the checks and balances that framers intended in the decision to bring our Nation into war.

Mr. Speaker, I hope many of my colleagues will consider cosponsoring this legislation. I ask the good Lord in

heaven to please bless our men and women in uniform and to continue to bless America.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

CHIP REAUTHORIZATION AND DENTAL HEALTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to express my appreciation to Speaker PELOSI, Chairman DINGELL and our entire Congress which has passed a bipartisan, bicameral agreement to reauthorize the Children's Health Insurance Program for an additional 5 years.

While I would have preferred a bill with more funding to cover additional children, I am pleased that the \$35 billion increase agreed to by House and Senate negotiators will bring health coverage to approximately 10 million children in need, preserving coverage for the 6.6 million who are currently enrolled in a program, while reaching many others who are eligible but not enrolled.

I am especially pleased that the agreement ensures quality dental coverage for all children enrolled in CHIP. This provision became a major initiative for me following the tragic death of a 12-year-old Maryland boy named Deamonte Driver.

Mr. Speaker, Deamonte died February of this year when an untreated tooth infection spread to his brain. Eighty dollars worth of dental care might have saved his life, but Deamonte was poor and homeless. He did not have access to a dentist. Deamonte Driver's case was rare and extreme, but he was by no means alone in his suffering.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, dental decay is the second most common chronic childhood disease in this country. And it is preventable. Few public health challenges of this magnitude are so easy to address. We are faced with this problem because we have systematically failed to provide children with the care they need.

Approximately 9 million children are uninsured in this country, but more than twice that amount, 20 million, are without dental insurance. That is why I am so glad that we will not only ensure the health coverage of 10 million children, but ensure that they have access to dental care as well.

Those of us in the Maryland delegation stood up in support of this vitally important initiative; and in a Congress-wide push, we were joined by 60 of our colleagues. On this issue, Democrats and Republicans from both Chambers have put aside differences to draft critically important legislation that will help American children. Unfortunately, we have received nothing but push-back from the administration.

In an arrogant attempt to interfere with the business of Congress, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services sent a letter to States on August 17 that has the potential of drastically limiting some States' ability to implement CHIP. H.R. 976 clarifies States' ability to implement the law, and it also addresses the President's concern that CHIP would not go to cover the Nation's poorest children. On this point, let me be clear: this legislation provides health insurance coverage to poor children, children who were already eligible for the benefit but were not enrolled.

President Bush is playing politics with our children's health by threatening to veto the bipartisan CHIP reauthorization and deny 10 million low-income kids the health care they need and deserve. The President has instead expressed support for his own CHIP proposal, which will result in 84,000 low-income children losing their health care coverage, according to the Congressional Budget Office.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that my colleagues sent a strong message to the President by voting in favor of the bicameral CHIP reauthorization.

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CONFLICT IN BURMA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHR-ABACHER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow the Foreign Affairs Committee will mark up legislation dealing with the tumultuous events now taking place in Burma. I am an original cosponsor, and I would ask my colleagues to support the bill.

Mr. Speaker, we may be witnessing an historic event taking place in Burma. Religious leaders are bravely confronting a violent, brutal military dictatorship. The people of Burma are telling the generals who have oppressed them and looted their country for decades to peacefully step aside and let a democratically elected government rule the nation.

Nobel Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi and her National League for Democracy overwhelmingly won elections back in 1990, but corrupt and brutal generals betrayed their people. They ignored the election results.

The SLORC, which is what the Burmese military regime called itself, then commenced to murder, torture and imprison anyone who would oppose their tyranny. Further, they have plundered Burma's vast natural resources, with the help of their Chinese masters and other foreign looters.

Now, at long last, the people of Burma have a chance. This is their moment. I urge all Burmese soldiers: do not kill your own people to further the greed and corruption of those who have sold out your country to the Chinese.